

# *Unexpected New Life* EASTER

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LETTER

MARCH

2018

Easter in my family is a very significant time, but it follows a very usual pattern. There are the hot cross buns and Easter eggs, an active engagement in the worship life of the church, and often an ecumenical service or activity on Good Friday or Easter Sunday. It certainly is a special time to remember and reflect on the events leading up to and including Jesus' crucifixion, and eventually to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

I grew up in a manse and so Easter always involved a busy time with services of worship. An unexpected surprise happened one year. The church leaders encouraged my dad to have Easter off for once. (This is definitely not a hint.) Our family excitedly joined a number of families and we went camping in caravans on the bank of the Murray River near Boundary Bend. We had a fantastic time away. It was completely and utterly unexpected.

One of the unexpected events in the Easter story for me is Peter denying knowing Jesus not once, but three times. Peter had left his fishing life and followed Jesus. He had observed and listened to Jesus. He was one of the inner circle of disciples. He had moments of great insight. He had pledged his loyalty. When the crunch came he said "I do not know the man you are talking about". How could he say this?

Then I find myself thinking about how I might be denying knowing Jesus. I don't verbalise not knowing Jesus. But do I keep quiet about injustice or greed or a lack of compassion, or intolerance or prejudice, because it is easier to do that than to speak up? Does my lifestyle mean that I just fit in to our culture and so I look no different, as a follower of Jesus, from others? Am I denying Jesus in some sense? To put this positively, I could from time to time think about what choices I could be making that would enable me more authentically to live as a follower of Jesus. It is my desire to embody my faith as fully as possible. It is probably your desire too.

Jesus' death and resurrection remind us that what might seem impossible is possible, that unexpected change and the transformation of lives are possible through God's gift of new life. Living life in relationship with Jesus is an invitation to live life to the full. Encountering the risen Jesus and enabled by the Holy Spirit, the disciples found a new confidence and enthusiasm for their faith and life. The Spirit working through them enabled many others to experience this gift of new life and the early church grew and flourished.

As we reflect on and experience this Easter season, the ministry team hopes that you will be blessed by God and that you will experience or continue to experience God's wonderful gift of unexpected new life.

May you all have a thoughtful, reflective, blessed and safe Easter season.

From

*Neil* on behalf of the ministry team.



# GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING CHURCH

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**15-20 March: Getaways** in Warragul

**22 March: Hot Cross Bun Morning Tea at The Hub** –10am – 12noon.

**April 22: Seniors Service** - 2pm

**April 28: Walk A-Thon** - 8am

**13 May: Mothers Day**

**24th May: Australia's Biggest Morning Tea at The Hub** – 10am – 12noon.

**8-11 June: State Youth Games**

**24 June: Anniversary Service** - 10am

**29 July: 10am Service followed by Congregational meeting**

**15th August: Muffin Morning Tea at The Hub** – 10am – 12noon.

**2 September: Fathers Day**

**22nd September: Moon Festival**

**20 October: Fete** - 8.30am - 2pm

**21 October: 10am Service**

**25th October: Seniors' Morning Tea at The Hub** – 10am – 12noon.

**21 November: Children's Nativity Photos at The Hub** – 10am – 12noon.

**2 December: 10am Service followed by Christmas Lunch**

**6th December: Christmas Morning Tea at The Hub** – 10am – 12noon



### **Easter Services including Holy Week**

Monday 26 March - 7.30pm

Tuesday 27 March - 7.30pm

Wednesday 28 March - 7.30pm

Maundy Thursday 29 March - 8pm

Good Friday - 9.15am March 30

Easter Day - 10am April 1

### **Free Families Easter Event**

Sunday 1 April - 3pm

Easter Egg hunt, games, crafts, activities & more.